

## **Is your teaching and preaching being heard? Why it matters!**

**By Bob Young**

The church is called to preach and teach. That preaching and teaching must be heard. Both elements are essential. The gospel must be sounded forth; the gospel must be heard. The message must be sent; the message must be received. Communication has two essential elements – sending and receiving. We must constantly ask ourselves, “Is our preaching effective? How can our teaching and preaching be more effective?”

Paul instructed to Timothy to be an example; watch your life and doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1-16).

In the world today, including the world of social media, how do we do this? In what sense are we examples? How do others know us? How do others see our faith, life, and doctrine? How do others know that we are practicing what we preach?

Preachers and teachers should evaluate how effectively the gospel is going forth. Two questions that relate to the sender and the message must be asked, followed by two questions related to the reception of the message.

### **Do you speak with credibility?**

Credibility is earned. The sender of the message must demonstrate competence. The message must matter.

I read and listen to those who tell me about the importance of the word, but I can tell by the shallowness of their lessons that they are not spending significant time and study in the Word.

Are you spending extended hours in the study of the Word?

Do your lessons make clear the life applications?

Are you simply borrowing the outlines of others?

Listeners can tell if you have invested time in analyzing the text. Does the shape of your message come from the shape of the text? Does your outline of the text reflect the intent of the original author? Have you spent time studying context, grammar, syntax, vocabulary, the basics of Bible study and analysis?

### **Does what you are saying matter?**

When I was young, I wanted to speak about everything. Through the years, I have learned that the urge to comment and teach on every subject weakens my voice.

Will people listen to us on the weightier matters if we exhaust them with our views on lesser matters?

Why are we so inclined to speculate about curiosity questions and things the Bible does not say.

We must fight the temptation to speak too much. Social media, blogs, and YouTube offer endless opportunities to be heard. They are a blessing; there is the risk of overexposure.

As a rule, people who talk too much are heard too little.

### **Is the message reaching others effectively? Do others want to hear what you are saying? Are others listening to what you say?**

Some preachers are constantly online, Facebook live, posting on multiple sites and using various media, but few people are listening. I see live videos with 2 or 3 people listening. God’s saving message is for everyone. Are those most in need of the message listening?

### **Are those outside of Christ listening?**

When we speak, our words must carry the unique voice of the Gospel. If our teachings are no different from those of other religious groups, or of nonbelievers, they are unnecessary and superfluous.

The goal of preaching is not only to speak, but to speak in way that will be heard.

Reaching this goal requires strategic focused use of our voice, to reduce the chance of getting lost in the noise of our over-messaged world.

When we do have an audience, we must deliver something meaningful, unique, gospel-oriented.

### **Concluding Suggestions**

In your preaching and teaching, deliver meaning, depth, help, and hope, so that non-Christians want to hear. Prepare yourself deeply in study so you have a compelling word from God shared with certainty and conviction. Remember that God is the one who empowers our preaching and teaching.

Make sure you have something to say.

Say it with credibility so that all will listen and be changed.